Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 U.S. Application No. 10/800,677

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Corrected FIG. 3 having the designation "PRIOR ART" is hereby submitted.

Attachment: 1 Sheet of Replacement Drawing

REMARKS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-6 have been examined in the present application. Claims 2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito (U.S. 6,514,091) in view of Kato (U.S. 6,846,183). Claim 2 and 6 are patentable over the prior art.

By this Amendment, Applicant is amending claims 1-6 and is adding new claims 7 and 8.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant has corrected the noted deficiencies. Withdrawal of the rejection is hereby respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,514,091 to Saito in view of U.S. Patent 6,846,183 to Kato.

Initially, Applicant notes that Kato qualifies as prior art under §102(e) by virtue of its December 2, 2003 filing date. Further, Kato's effective filing date of December 2, 2003 is after the effective filing date (March 17, 2003) of the Japanese Priority Document (JP 2003-071337) for the present application. Accordingly, Applicant is submitting a verified English translation

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of the Japanese Priority Document (JP 2003-017337) in order to perfect priority and antedate the

Kato reference filed December 2, 2003.

Therefore, Kato is not prior art under §103(a) and cannot cure the defects noted by the

Examiner in Saito. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over the applied art. Claims 3, 4 and 5 are

patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

New Claims

Claims 7 and 8 are dependent from claim 1. Therefore, claims 7 and 8 are patentable at

least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed

to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is

kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue

Respectfully submitted,

Registration No. 32,778

Brian W. Hannon

Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any

overpayments to said Deposit Account.

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC

Telephone: (202) 293-7060

Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

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Date: August 31, 2006

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